



DRAFT

GCSE

SOCIOLOGY



Our specification combines traditional and contemporary topics that will enable your students to focus on their own experience of the social world. It encourages them to build on this framework in order to analyse different aspects of contemporary society while communicating their knowledge and understanding in an innovative and creative way.

What's happening to GCSEs?

OCR is offering new GCSEs for first teaching in September 2009*.

We've taken this opportunity to improve the quality of our GCSEs for teachers and learners alike.

We've made improvements in three key areas: updated and relevant content, a focus on developing students' personal, learning and thinking skills, and flexible assessment, so teachers can choose the best learning approach for the job.

We want to make the introduction of these new GCSEs as easy for you to manage as possible.

The main changes are:

- Controlled assessment will be introduced for most subjects
- The opportunity will be taken to bring course content up to date
- Examinations should provide opportunity for extended writing and more varied question types
- All GCSEs will meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Our approach is to provide consistency across all our GCSEs by offering the flexibility that unitised qualifications bring, allowing teaching and assessment in either a linear or unitised fashion.

*Not all GCSEs are changing. There are a few exceptions: the new Science GCSE was introduced in 2006. New English, English Literature, ICT and Maths GCSEs will be offered for first teaching in 2010.



Improving GCSE Sociology with OCR

We've involved teachers throughout the development process, so the new specifications, support materials and schemes of work should be exactly what you need to teach OCR GCSE Sociology. To ensure accuracy in our content, we've also consulted subject associations, professional membership groups, subject societies and other subject experts.



Our GCSE Sociology offers:

- A good mix of popular traditional and contemporary topics
- New introductory topics that are more interesting and enjoyable for your students, for example the sociology of youth
- The opportunity to develop and demonstrate applied sociological research skills.

Making change easy

We'd like to make these changes as easy for you to manage as possible. To minimise disruption, we will:

- Guide you through the process of moving to OCR
- Bring you the latest information through our Focus on 14–19 magazine and our new website www.GCSEchanges.com
- Show you approved specifications one year ahead of first teaching, so you have plenty of preparation time
- Offer you a range of OCR support materials, including schemes of work and sample assessment materials, as we did with GCEs
- Make OCR's publisher partner resources – tailored to the new specifications – available from January 2009
- Endorse a variety of published resources, giving you a wider choice of quality support materials.

We're also running extra INSET and training courses across the UK, so now it's even easier to discover how OCR has developed its specifications.

Controlled assessment

While reviewing GCSEs, QCA looked into the coursework element of the current qualifications and decided to introduce controlled assessment as an alternative to coursework. This will address some of the issues raised in recent coursework reviews, such as plagiarism.

Controlled assessment has to be done in a supervised environment. However, if the task has a research element, the student may complete this without supervision.

The benefits of controlled assessment include:

- More straightforward marking – for most subjects, we provide worksheets for students to complete
- Improved reliability and validity
- Varying levels of control, to help you manage the assessments and your time more easily
- Greater confidence in authenticating students' work as their own
- Greater ease in fitting assessments into your normal teaching programmes.

Controlled assessment is not part of the GCSE Sociology specification.



Flexible assessment

The assessment for the new OCR GCSEs is organised into units which can either all be taken at the end of the course in a linear fashion, or be used to complement a more unitised approach to teaching and learning. This gives you the flexibility to choose the assessment approach best suited to your centre and your students. A unitised structure gives you the flexibility to co-teach short and full courses.

We already offer assessments that are organised into units at A Level and for some existing GCSEs. For many subjects, assessments will be available twice a year. Flexible assessment means:

- You will have a choice of learning approaches – linear or unitised
- The assessment can be timed to match the point of learning within the course, making it easier for candidates to show what they know, understand and can do
- Students can re-sit a unit rather than repeat the entire assessment
- Some students are motivated by ongoing feedback and this helps them identify their learning needs
- A unitised approach makes it easier for students to stay on track with their studies and manage their time effectively
- The pressure of an 'all or nothing' assessment is removed
- Examination stress is reduced by permitting assessment over a longer period so that not all assessments are concentrated in a narrow window at the end of two years

- With a similar format to A Levels and Diplomas, GCSEs will help prepare students for the next phase of their education.

To ensure that the assessment supports the coherence of the GCSEs and there is no over-assessment, QCA has put two rules in place: 40% of the assessment must happen at the end of the course and only one re-sit of each assessment unit is allowed.

You may know 'unitised' as modular.

Unit title and description	Assessment including duration	Weighting
Unit B671: What is Sociology? This unit is made up of two sections: Section A: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages candidates to develop a critical understanding of sociological evidence and research processes. This includes knowledge of the main methods and stages of sociological research. Section B: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces the basic key concepts in sociology and starts to make links between the individual and society, looking particularly at ideas of culture, socialisation and identity. 	Written examination 1 hour	25%
Unit B672: Socialisation, Culture and Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers a choice of substantive topics through which the themes of socialisation, culture, identity, and power and control are developed. 	Written examination 1 hour 30 minutes	50%
Unit B673: Applying Sociological Research Techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates will be required to conduct a sociological enquiry using practical research methods. Candidates are examined on the process of preparing the topic for study, applying different methods and evidence to investigate it, and drawing conclusions from the data. 	Written examination 1 hour	25%

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives are designed to reflect the non-statutory guidelines for Sociology.

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following in the context of the content described:

AO1

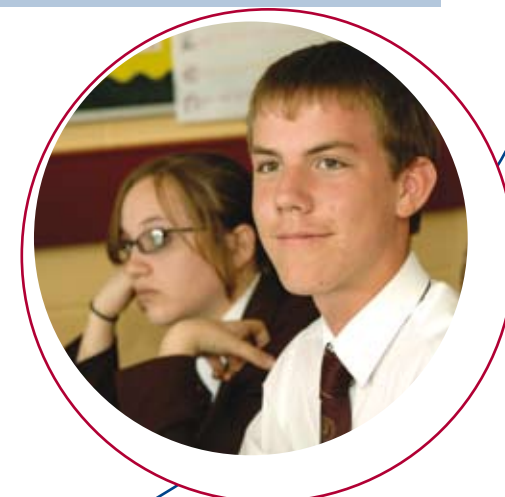
- Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of social structures, processes and issues.

AO2

- Apply knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts both familiar and unfamiliar.

AO3

- Select, interpret, analyse and evaluate information from different sources.



What changes, and what stays the same?

	What changes?	What stays the same?
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This subject is now unitised• There is no coursework or controlled assessment• The units are clearly defined and easy to assess.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The questions are semi-structured.
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is more consistency – the topics to be assessed will not change each year• New topics have been introduced, such as the sociology of youth, as a result of customer feedback. Less popular topics have been taken out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key topics remain the same• Focus on applied sociological research skills remains a key part of the course. Candidates must conduct a sociological enquiry; the process of carrying out this enquiry will be what they are assessed on.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unit B672 is worth 50% and Units B671 and B673 are worth 25% each• Units B671 and B673 are worth 60 marks each• Unit B672 is now worth 120 marks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The units are assessed externally.

Support for GCSE Sociology teachers

OCR offers a range of support materials, developed following extensive research and consultation with teachers. We've designed them to save you time when preparing for the new specifications and to support you while teaching them.

Our support materials and events include face-to-face training courses, schemes of work that you can customise, endorsed publisher partner resources, access to teacher and examiner networks (both online and offline), plus an extensive past-papers service.

OCR's online resources include:

- E-communities – online networks of subject specialists for sharing knowledge, views and ideas
- Interchange – a completely free and secure website that helps you carry out the administrative tasks associated with examinations quickly and easily
- Past examination papers
- Marking schemes
- Subject e-alerts – for teachers who register for updates.

We offer a wide range of training courses in the UK, so you have easy access to information about our new specifications – direct from the experts. See over for more details.



Our Get Ready events offer a taste of the new specification. Dates are given below, and you can book your place now at www.GCSEchanges.com.

Later, we'll be running our Get Started events, which take you through the specification in more detail and help you work towards first teaching. They will take place during the spring and summer terms 2009.

Get Ready – introducing the new specification (first teaching from September 2009)*

This course is for all teachers – new and experienced – who are interested in finding out more about the new specification. It's open to you, even if you don't teach the current OCR specification.

It's a **FREE** half-day session, including refreshments, a light finger buffet and course materials, offering an overview of the new OCR specification in GCSE Sociology. Key features include:

- A look at the new structure, content and assessment methods
- A comparison between old and new specification content
- An introduction to the support and resources available from OCR
- A summary of the benefits of choosing the new OCR specification.

Date	Location	Course code
Fri 11 Jul 08 AM	London	OSOA101
Fri 11 Jul 08 PM	London	OSOA102
Thurs 11 Sept 08 AM	Birmingham	OSOA103
Thurs 11 Sept 08 PM	Birmingham	OSOA104
Thurs 25 Sept 08 AM	London	OSOA105
Thurs 25 Sept 08 PM	London	OSOA106
Thurs 15 Jan 09 AM	London	OSOA107
Thurs 15 Jan 09 PM	London	OSOA108

Please note:

- Free OCR Training courses will not incur any penalty fees however, so that we can offer your place to another delegate please notify us in good time of your course cancellation.
- Dates are subject to change so please ensure you read your booking confirmation and web updates as OCR Training cannot be held responsible for delegates who attend on an incorrect date.
- Courses throughout summer 2008 and autumn 2008 terms may be based on the draft specification.
- *The times of these courses may vary from the standard advertised time.

We're working with publisher partner Heinemann to provide further resources to support teachers of the new specification.

Resource	Format	Samples available from
Student Book	Print	March 2009



To find the latest information on published resources, please visit www.ocr.org.uk/sociology/newgcse and choose published resources from the right-hand menu.



www.ocr.org.uk

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